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FREDERIC THOMAS BLANCHARD
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TRANSLATION;

A

POEM.

By THOMAS FRANCKLIN,
Fellow of *Trinity-College*, CAMBRIDGE.

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TO THE

Right Honourable the EARLS of

GRANVILLE,

CHESTERFIELD,

AND

ORRERY,

The beſt Judges of antient Learning,

AND

Moſt diſtinguiſh'd Patrons of modern Merit;

The following LINES are humbly inſcrib'd,

BY

Their LORDSHIP'S

Moſt obedient and moſt
devoted humble Servant,

THOMAS FRANCKLIN.

858570

TRANSLATION;

A POEM.

" SUCH is our Pride, our Folly, or our Fate,
" That few, but ſuch as cannot write, Tranſlate.
So DENHAM ſung, who well the labour knew;
And an age paſt has left the maxim true.
Wit as of old, a proud imperious Lord,
Diſdains the plenty of another's board;
And haughty Genius ſeeks, like Philip's ſon,
Paths never trod before, and worlds unknown.
Unaw'd by theſe whilſt hands impure diſpenſe
The ſacred ſtreams of antient eloquence,

Pedants aſſume the taſk for ſcholars fit,
And blockheads riſe interpreters of wit.

In the fair field the vet'ran armies ſtand,
A firm, unconquer'd, formidable band,
When lo! Tranſlation comes and levels all;
By vulgar hands the braveſt heroes fall.
On eagle's wings ſee lofty Pindar ſoar;
Cowley attacks, and Pindar is no more.
O'er Tibur's ſwan the muſes wept in vain,
And mourn'd their bard by cruel Dunſter ſlain.
By Ogilby and Trap great Maro fell,
And Homer dy'd by Chapman and Ozell.

In bleſt Arabia's Plains unfading blow
Flow'rs ever fragrant, fruits immortal grow,
To northern climes th'unwilling gueſts convey,
The fruit ſhall wither, and the flow'r decay;

Ev'n

Line 18. *Cowley attacks*, &c. Nothing can be more contemptible than the tranſlations and imitations of Pindar done by Cowley, which yet have had their admirers, in an Age not quite ſo ſagacious as our own.

Lin. 20. See Horace's Epiſtles, Satires, and Art of Poetry, *done into Engliſh* by S. Dunſter, D. D. Prebendary of Sarum.

Ev'n ſo when here the ſweets of Athens come,
Or the fair produce of imperial Rome,
They pine and ſicken in th'unfriendly ſhade,
Their roſes droop, and all their laurels fade.

THE modern critick, whoſe unletter'd pride,
Big with itſelf, contemns the world beſide,
If haply told that Terence once cou'd charm,
Each feeling heart that Sophocles cou'd warm,
Scours every ſtall for Echard's dirty page,
Or pores in Adams for th'Athenian ſtage;
With joy he reads the ſervile mimics o'er,
Pleas'd to diſcover what he gueſs'd before;
Concludes that Attic wit's *extremely low*,
And gives up Greece to Wotton and Perrault.

OUR

Lin. 31. *The modern critic*, &c. Les belles traductions (ſays Boileau) ſont des preuves ſans replique en faveur des anciens, qu'on leur donne les Racines pour interpretes, & ils ſcauront plaire aujourdhui comme autrefois. Certain it is, that the contempt, in which the antients are held by the illiterate wits of the preſent age, is in a great meaſure owing to the number of bad tranſlations.

Lin. 36. See Adams's proſe tranſlation of Sophocles.

Lin. 39. *Extremely low.* A favourite coffee-houſe phraſe.

Lin. 40. *Wotton and Perrault.* See Wotton's diſcourſe on antient and modern learning, and Perrault's defence of his Siecle de Louis XIV.

Our ſhallow language, ſhallow'r judges ſay,
Can ne'er the force of antient ſenſe convey;
As well might Vanbrugh ev'ry ſtone revile
That ſwells enormous Blenheim's awkward pile;
The guiltleſs pen as well might Mauro blame,
For writing ill, and ſullying Arthur's fame;
Succeſsleſs lovers blaſt the maid they woo'd,
And theſe a Tongue they never underſtood;
That Tongue, which gave immortal Shakeſpear fame,
Which boaſts a Prior's and a Thomſon's name;
Gracefull and chaſte, which flows in Addiſon,
With native charms, and vigour all its own;
In Bolinbroke and Swift its beauties ſhine,
In Rowe's ſoft numbers, Johnſon's nervous line,
Dryden's free vein, and Milton's work divine.

But, ſuch, alas! diſdain to borrow fame,
Or live like dulneſs in another's name;
And hence the taſk for nobleſt ſouls deſign'd,
Giv'n to the weak, the taſteleſs, and the blind;
To ſome low wretch who, proſtitute for pay,
Lets out to Curll the labours of the day,
Or

Lin. 46. *Arthur's fame.* See Blackmore's king Arthur, an heroic poem.
Lin. 60. *To Curll,* &c. Moſt of the bad tranſlations, which we have of eminent authors, were done by garreteers under the inſpection of this gentleman, who paid them by the ſheet for their haſty performances.

Careleſs who hurries o'er th' unblotted line,
Impatient ſtill to finiſh and to dine;
Or ſome pale pedant, whoſe encumber'd brain
O'er the dull page hath toil'd for years in vain,
Who writes at laſt ambitiouſly to ſhew
How much a fool may read, how little know;
Can theſe on fancy's wing with Plato ſoar?
Can theſe a Tully's active mind explore?
Great nature's ſecret ſprings can theſe reveal,
Or paint thoſe paſſions, which they ne'er cou'd feel?
Yet will they dare the pondrous lance to wield,
Yet will they ſtrive to lift the ſeven-fold ſhield,
The rock of Ajax ev'ry child wou'd throw,
And ev'ry ſtripling bend Ulyſſes' bow.

THERE are, who timid line by line purſue,
Anxious to keep th' Original in view;
Who mark each footſtep where their maſter trod,
And after all their pains have miſt the road.

THERE are, an author's ſenſe who boldly quit,
As if aſham'd to own the debt of wit;

Lin. 75, 79. *There are*, &c. The reader will eaſily recollect inſtances to illuſtrate each of theſe Remarks, more eſpecially the laſt; half our tranſlations

Who leave their fellow-trav'ller on the ſhore,
Launch in the deep, and part to meet no more.

Some from reflection catch the weaken'd ray,
And ſcarce a gleam of doubtful ſenſe convey,
Preſent a picture's picture to your view,
Where not a line is juſt or feature true;

Thus Greece and Rome, in modern dreſs array'd,
Is but antiquity in maſquerade.
Diſguis'd in Oldſworth's verſe or Watſon's proſe,
What claſſic friend his alter'd Flaccus knows?
Whilſt great Longinus gives to Welſted fame,
And Tacitus to Gordon lends his name,
Unmeaning ſtrains debaſe the Mantuan muſe,
And Terence ſpeaks the language of the ſtews.

In

tions being done from tranſlations by ſuch as were never able to conſult the original. One of theſe gentlemen having occaſion in his verſion to mention Dionyſius of Halicarnaſſus, not having the good fortune to be acquainted with any ſuch writer, makes uſe of the French liberty of curtailing, and without ſcruple calls him Dennis of Halicarnaſſus. Miſtakes as groſs as this often occur, tho' perhaps not many altogether ſo ridiculous.

Lin. 91. See Welſted's tranſlation of Longinus, done almoſt word for word from Boileau.

Lin. 92. *To Gordon.* --- This gentleman tranſlated Tacitus in a very ſtiff and

In learning thus muſt Britain's ſons decay,
And ſee her rival bear the prize away,
In arts as well as arms to Gallia yield,
And own her happier ſkill in either field?
See where her boaſted d'Ablancourt appears,
Her Mongaults, Brumoys, Olivets, Daciers;
Careful to make each antient's merit known,
Who juſt to others fame have rais'd their own;
Nor wonder theſe ſhou'd claim ſuperior praiſe;
A nation thanks them, and a monarch pays.
Far other fate attends our hireling bard;
A ſneer his praiſe, a pittance his reward,

The

and affected manner, tranſpoſing words, and placing the verb at the end of the ſentence, according to the Latin idiom. He was called in his life-time Tacitus-Gordon.

Lin. 99. *To Gallia yield.* It was ſaid by a great wit in the laſt war, that he ſhould never doubt of our ſucceſs, if we could once bring ourſelves to hate the French as heartily as we do the arts and ſciences. It is indiſputable, that they are more warmly encouraged, and conſequently more cultivated and improved in France than amongſt us. Their tranſlations (eſpecially in proſe) are acknowledged to be more faithful and correct, and in general more lively and ſpirited than ours.

Lin. 101. The French had ſo high an opinion of d'Ablancourt's merit as to think him deſerving of the following epitaph:

L'illuſtre d'Ablancourt repoſe en ce tombeau,
Son genie à ſon ſiécle a ſervi de flambeau,
Dans ſes fameux ecrits toute la France admire
Des Grecs & des Romains les precieux treſors;
A ſon trepas on ne peut dire
Qui perd le plus, des vivans ou des morts.

The butt of wit, and jeſt of every muſe,
Foes laugh to ſcorn, and even friends abuſe,
The great Tranſlator bids each dunce tranſlate,
And ranks us all with Tibbald and with Tate.

But know, whate'er proud Art hath call'd her own,
The breathing canvas, and the ſculptur'd ſtone,
The poets verſe; 'tis Imitation all;
Great Nature only is Original.
Her various charms in various forms expreſs'd,
They beſt have pleas'd us, who have copy'd beſt;
And thoſe ſtill ſhine more eminently bright,
Who ſhew the goddeſs in the faireſt light.

So when great Shakeſpear to his Garrick join'd,
With mutual aid conſpire to rouze the mind,
'Tis not a ſcene of idle mimickry,
'Tis Lear's, Hamlet's, Richard's ſelf we ſee;
We feel the actor's ſtrength, the Poet's fire;
With joy we praiſe, with rapture we admire,

To

The great Tranſlator, &c. Pope in his epiſtle to Arbuthnot, after his enumeration of dunces, concludes with theſe two Lines.

All theſe my modeſt ſatire bade *tranſlate*,
And own'd that nine ſuch poets made a *Tate*. Ver. 189.

I make no doubt but the very deſpicable light, in which Tranſlation is here repreſented, may have deterred many from engaging in it, who would perhaps have made no contemptible figure in that branch of literature.

To ſee ſuch pow'rs within the reach of art,
And Fiction thus ſubdue the human heart.

When Sarto's pencil trac'd the faithful line,
So juſt each ſtroke, ſo equal the deſign,
That pleas'd he ſaw aſtoniſh'd Julio ſtand,
Nor know his own, nor Raphael's magic hand;
Bluſhing to find himſelf enamour'd grown
Of rival charms and beauties not his own.

Theirs be the taſk to comment and tranſlate,
Like theſe who judge, like theſe who imitate.

Unless an author like a miſtreſs warms,
How ſhall we hide his faults, or taſte his charms,

Lin. 129. Andrea del Sarto, being deſired by Frederic duke of Mantua to copy a picture of Leo X. did it with ſo much juſtneſs, that Julio Romano, who drew the drapery of that piece under Raphael, took his copy for the original, and ſaid to Vaſari, " Don't I ſee the ſtrokes that I ſtruck with my own hand; but Vaſari ſhewing him Del Sarto's mark, he was convinced of his miſtake.

The ſtory is told at large in the 27th chapter of the firſt book of De Pile's Art of Painting.

Lin. 137. *Unleſs, &c.* Roſcommon ſays,

" Chuſe then an author as you chuſe a friend."

Perhaps the image is better drawn from the more lively paſſion.

How all his modeſt, latent beauties find,
How trace each lovelier feature of the mind,
Soften each blemiſh, and each grace improve,
And treat him with the dignity of love?

'Tis not enough that, fraught with learning's ſtore,
By the dim lamp the taſteleſs critic pore,
'Tis not enough that wit's miſguiding ray
Uncertain glance, and yield a doubtful day,
Not ev'n when both by partial nature giv'n
United bleſs the favourite of heav'n;
Unleſs, by ſecret ſympathy combin'd,
The faithful glaſs reflects its kindred mind;
Unleſs from ſoul to ſoul th' imparted fire
Congenial catch and kindle warm deſire;
Ev'n ſuch as lives in Rowe's enraptur'd ſtrain,
And gives Pharſalia to our eyes again,
Where glowing in each animated line,
We ſee the fiery ſoul of Lucan ſhine;

Or

Lin. 149, *Unleſs by ſecret*, &c. A biaſs of inclination towards a particular author, and a ſimilarity of genius in the tranſlator ſeem more immediately neceſſary than wit or learning.

Lin. 156, See Rowe's tranſlation of Lucan's Pharſalia, at the end of which is a ſhort ſupplement written in the true ſpirit of the original.

Or ſuch as gilds the fair hiſtoric page,
For Smith reſerv'd to grace our latter age;
Such as o'er Dryden all its influence ſhed,
And bade his muſe recall the mighty dead,
Such as in Pope's extenſive genius ſhone,
And made immortal Homer all our own.

View all that proud antiquity diſplays,
Count o'er her boaſted heirs of endleſs praiſe,
Who thought ſo nobly or who wrote ſo well,
Britain can ſhew th' illuſtrious parallel.
Methinks I hear each venerable ſhade
For baſe neglect his genuine ſons upbraid.
Why wou'd not Congreve Afer's charms revive,
Or tender Hammond bid Tibullus live?
Plautus had pleas'd in Vanbrugh's looſer page,
And Otway ſhou'd have trod the Græcian ſtage;
Lucian wou'd ſhine unveil'd by Swift alone,
And Tully calls in vain for Middleton;
A Livy's ſenſe demands a St. John's ſtile,
And Plato aſks a Melmoth or a Boyle.

Ev'n

Lin. 158. See Smith's tranſlation of Thucydides, lately publiſhed.
Lin. 162. If Pope had never produced any thing but his noble tranſlation of Homer, it had been ſufficient to have eſtabliſhed his reputation as a poet.
Lin. 170. Hammond, author of Love elegies.

Ev'n now there are, e'er learning take her flight,
And gothic darkneſs ſpread a ſecond night;
Tho' ſcience droop, and ling'ring arts decay,
There are, who gild the evening of our day.
Once more behold, majeſtic in her tears,
By Gray adorn'd, fair Elegy appears,
Whilſt by her ſide the ſoft Elfrida ſtands,
And all our love and all our grief demands;
With Roman ſpirit Johnſon's manly page
Riſes ſevere to ſcourge a venal age;
Brown draws the pen in ſacred truth's defence,
And Armſtrong paints his own benevolence.
From antient models theſe exalted few
Their faireſt forms and bright ideas drew;
We know the fountain whence the waters came,
Nor wonder at the clearneſs of the ſtream.

Yet ſtill, fair Greece, we ſee thy garlands torn,
We ſee thee ſtill thy widow'd altars mourn;

On

Lin. 182. See Elegy in a country churchyard.
Lin. 183. Elfrida, by Mr. Maſon.
Lin. 185. Samuel Johnſon, author of the Rambler, and alſo of two fine imitations of Juvenal.
Lin. 187. See Eſſay on the Characteriſtics of lord Shaftsbury.
Lin. 188. See an epiſtle on Benevolence, by Dr. Armſtrong, author of a poem on Health, one of the beſt performances in the Engliſh language.

On us thy heroes ſtill indignant frown,
Or look with awful indignation down;
The tears of Rome for injur'd learning flow,
And Athens grieves that Britain is her foe.

Will you not riſe then, O! you ſons of fame,
To vindicate the Greek and Roman name?
On friends oppreſs'd your gen'rous aid beſtow,
And pay the debt of gratitude you owe?
Or can you ſtill their wrongs unpitying ſee,
Nor ſocial join with Warton and with Me?

Whilst round his brows the Mantuan ivy twine,
Cautious to tread in Attic paths be mine;
To fame unknown, but emulous to pleaſe,
Trembling I ſeek th' immortal Sophocles.

Genius of Greece, do thou my breaſt inſpire
With ſome warm portion of thy poet's fire,
From hands profane defend his much-lov'd name;
From cruel Tibbald wreſt his mangled fame;

Lin. 204. Mr. Warton has lately publiſhed a new tranſlation of the eclogues and georgics of Virgil, and joined it to Mr. Pit's excellent tranſlation of the Æneid.

Lin. 212. Tibbald (or Theobald) tranſlated two or three plays of Sophocles, and threaten'd the public with more.

Give him once more to bid the heart o'er-flow
In graceful tears, and ſympathizing woe;
A father's death while ſoft Electra mourn,
Or ſhed her ſorrows o'er a brother's urn;
Or fair Antigone her griefs relate;
Or poor Tecmeſſa weep her hapleſs ſtate;
Or OEdipus revolve the dark decrees of fate.
Cou'd I like him the various paſſions move,
Granville wou'd ſmile, and Cheſterfield approve;
Each letter'd ſon of ſcience wou'd commend,
Each gentle muſe wou'd mark me for her friend;
Iſis well-pleas'd wou'd join a ſiſter's praiſe,
And Cam applauding conſecrate the lays.

Speedily will be Publiſh'd,

PROPOSALS

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SOPHOCLES.

Tranſlated into Blank VERSE,

By THOMAS FRANCKLIN,

Fellow of Trinity-College, and Greek Profeſſor in the Univerſity of CAMBRIDGE.

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